The Glory of the Latter House:

A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT

THE DEDICATION OF THE MEETING-HOUSE

OF THE

SECOND CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY IN WORCESTER,

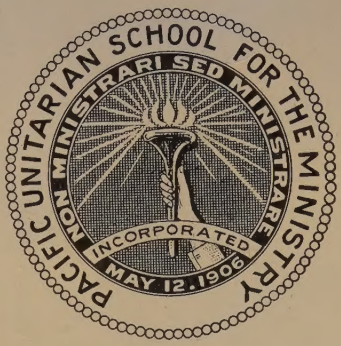
MARCH 26, 1851.

BY ALONZO HILL,

MINISTER OF SAID SOCIETY.

WORCESTER:
ANDREW HUTCHINSON.
1851.

BV
4258
H54
1851
GTU
Storage



BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

The Glory of the Latter House:

A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT

THE DEDICATION OF THE MEETING-HOUSE

OF THE

SECOND CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY IN WORCESTER,

MARCH 26, 1851.

BY ALONZO HILL,

MINISTER OF SAID SOCIETY.

GRADUATE THEOLOGICAL UNION
LIBRARY
1962

WORCESTER:
ANDREW HUTCHINSON.
1851.

BU
4256
H54
1851

BOSTON:

PRINTED BY JOHN WILSON AND SON,

No. 22, SCHOOL-STREET.

E586.14
W89s H

TO THE MEMBERS

OF

THE SECOND CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY,

THIS DISCOURSE,

Delivered at the Dedication of their New Place of Worship,

AND AT THE CLOSE OF A MINISTRY OF TWENTY-FOUR YEARS,

ENDEARED BY A CORDIAL INTERCOURSE THAT HAS BEEN INTERRUPTED BY NO MOMENT OF ALIENATION, IMPAIRED BY NO ACT OF UNKINDNESS,

IS

GRATEFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY

INSCRIBED.

21365

DISCOURSE.

HAGGAI, II. 9.

THE GLORY OF THIS LATTER HOUSE SHALL BE GREATER THAN OF THE FORMER, SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS; AND IN THIS PLACE WILL I GIVE PEACE, SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS.

With the heart's gratitude do we offer unfeigned thanks to God for this auspicious day. Under what different circumstances did we last meet on this spot, and have we now come together! Then it was a summer night, and we were called from our homes by the alarum-bell and the startling cry of fire. The heavens were lighted up; hills, woods, and fields shone around; and we saw the church which had so long sheltered our fathers and ourselves enveloped in flames; we saw porch and tower and dome under which we had so often come, and pew and pulpit in which we had so long worshipped, all prostrated in a single hour, and reduced to a naked, smouldering ruin. We come this spring morning to take possession of, and to dedicate to religious purposes, this fairer structure, which we have been permitted to

build. To-day, for the first time, we obey the majestic tones of the bell which is henceforth to call us and our children to worship. We enter doors which, with the returning sabbaths, shall be thrown invitingly open; and take possession of pews, and gather around the pulpit, henceforth to be our religious home. We enter these courts, now echoing for the first time with the voice of prayer, to be hallowed by our religious associations, to be consecrated by our religious affections, with feelings like those of the exile, who, weary months away from his home, his wanderings now all ended, returns to his native soil, and reposes once more amid familiar and well-loved objects. May the glory of this latter house be greater than of the former! May it be to us none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven! *

The language of the text which I have quoted is prophetic, and is descriptive of the temple about to be built in Jerusalem. "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts;" and therefore this temple shall be built with more of costliness and magnificence than the former. If this is the meaning of the prophet, applied to our own work, it is expressive of a fact. The glory of this house *is* greater than of the former. We have endeavored to render it more worthy of the service to which it is henceforth to be dedicated. In the first place, we have erected it upon

* Note A.

a spot already consecrated. In the earlier Christian times, in the selection of a site for a Christian church, men were influenced, not by considerations of convenience or beauty of situation, but by sacred associations. They chose spots where the great facts of Christian history had taken place; where the Saviour had been born, or where his parting footsteps had fallen; where the blood of saints had been spilled, or where their bones, enshrined in precious wood and metals and stones, were deposited. Over sacred relics and memorable spots Christian temples were reared, so that the savor of sanctity might ascend, and fill the house; and, through the influence of hallowed memories, the devotions of passing generations might be quickened, and the affections be raised more directly to heaven. So, my brethren, we have reared our church over a spot, not for the first time to be set apart from secular uses, but already consecrated and endeared by many tender and enkindling associations. Here, over these ashes, beneath these witnessing heavens, and in the midst of these familiar scenes, we have many times united, the living and the dead, in the touching services of religion. On soft summer days we have already sung our hymns and offered our prayers together. We have brought our children here for baptism; and here our sainted ones, on their way to the field of the graves, have paused; and we have paused and communed with them, until things present

seemed to vanish, and things invisible and spiritual were the only realities. And here, on this very spot, before most of us were born, sixty years ago, one of the memorable transactions to be recorded in our country annals took place. Here the first pulpit Bible * ever published on this western continent was printed and published to the world, — a fact that should invest this spot with more interest than if an apostle had stood and preached here.

But this is not all. We have sought also to bring to the service of religion the costliness, the grace, and ornament of architectural skill. There is a voice in architecture as well as in music and poetry; and the same reasons should urge us to build our churches with taste, with beautiful and majestic proportions, as now move us to select for the services of the choir the well-constructed hymn, and have it sung in strains of effective music. Suppose that, each morning before the cares of the day should begin, this whole community should come together to listen to one of the soul-stirring hymns that shook the old cathedrals centuries ago, or one of the sermons of the great Christian orators that men came from afar to hear, would not all go forth better prepared for life's great responsibilities and duties? Even such a hymn, such a sermon, repeated with each morning's light and through the hours of the day, is the majestic and beautiful church.

* Note B.

There is an eloquence in the graceful spire, — a winning persuasiveness in the classic pillared portico, — a sublimity in the arched, lofty ceiling, that lifts the thought upwards like the pillars and the arch of heaven. Travellers tell us of the effects produced by the solemn old churches which stand in lonely grandeur in the midst of European cities. Feelings of indescribable awe come over them as they pass them; and, when they go from the noisy, dusty street into their dim silence, they feel that they should put off their shoes from off their feet, for the ground on which they stand is holy.

I said there is a language in architecture. It is more than art or poetry. The beautiful and majestic church is symbolical; it is significant of great religious ideas. It speaks of man and his destinies, of the ends and aims of life. Standing in the midst of a city like this, it is its visible consecration to God and Christ, and spiritual growth and perfection. In the earlier times, Christian edifices were built in the form of ships; for it was said, our life is a tempestuous sea, over which darkness broods and the winds rage, and religion is the ark that will bear us onward to the haven of our rest. They were built again in the shape of the cross; for it was said, this symbol of the Christian's faith and hope should never pass from the sight or memory of men. They should see it from the market-place, and the corners of the streets:

it should tower above their habitations, their places of business, their places of recreation and repose, and hallow them all. It should stand out upon the sky, and impart healing and strength amid the fiery temptations and dread conflicts of life. Like that southern constellation which bears its name, seen of those who sail in southern seas, it should be an object of reverent regard when the night comes down, wear a look of friendliness in their lonely watches, and kindle their hope when the storms beat and the waves rise up around them. What would our cities be, if there were no sanctuary of repose in the midst of them, no spires of churches pointing to heaven? What would they be, if there were not in the midst of, above, and beyond this daily life the recognition of a greater than human authority, a sense of devotion and duty deeper than the grave, higher than the visible heavens? Who would dare to live in a place where religion had no temples, where no such authority was acknowledged, and no such sense of devotion and duty felt? If such a place there were, we should hurry through it as if it were a city of the plague. A voice would come to our ears like that which echoed through the vacant streets of Jerusalem on the eve of her destruction, when the tokens of the Divine Presence had already ceased in her temple, — "Arise, depart; for this is not your rest."

I said, then, taken literally, the prophecy of the

text has already had its fulfilment: the glory of this latter house is greater than of the former. But there is another and a higher meaning to be given to the language. The glory of an edifice consists not in the quality of the structure, but in the greatness of the work to which it is consecrated, in the intellectual and spiritual power which it sends forth. The cathedral at Worms where Luther met the banded hosts of the hierarchy, the humble parish-church at Berne where Zuingle meekly and bravely taught, — has a greater glory than St. Peter's, though jewelled diadems were devoted, though the four quarters of the world contributed, to its erection. The second temple of Jerusalem was greater, not because it was richer, but because a more glorious spiritual presence was there, and an influence went forth from it which changed the face of the world. So this temple which we build, so the temples which shall hereafter be built in the cities and villages of New England, shall have a greater glory, because they shall have a work to do; and, if they are faithful, will accomplish a work, in comparison with which all that has been accomplished in our past history will be as nothing. If this edifice shall be spared, it will witness changes more wonderful than any which we have yet witnessed. It will be standing when revolutions, God knows of what character, shall have passed over, and a new order of things have come in place of the old; when the

generation now living will all have passed away; when the inhabitants of this country will have grown to one hundred millions; when our city will number fifty, perhaps one hundred, thousand, and all the great interests of humanity be involved in their fidelity or neglect. The time will come, and I am awed as I think of it, when he who shall stand where I now stand, and lay his hand here, shall discuss themes, shall speak to congregations on questions, shall be taking a part in events, momentous beyond the power of thought. This pulpit shall be a centre of influence, shall be one of the instrumentalities that shall mould and direct the vastest interests that were ever brought together since the world began. And how, in what manner, and with what degree of success, shall its work be accomplished? "The glory of the latter house shall be greater than of the former;" the glory of the churches shall be greater; they shall have in these later times a grander work to perform than in former days. In what way? What hitherto has been the great achievement of our New England churches? What is the distinctive work which they have accomplished? What nobler work is yet before them? In what respects shall their glory be greater?

It shall be my object to answer these two simple questions; and, in answering them, I indicate the great purposes to which this house is to be dedicated.

In what, then, has the glory of our New England churches consisted? What is the distinctive work which they have accomplished? I reply, first of all, and chiefly: They have maintained the independency of religious associations, vindicated and established the system of New England Congregationalism, and in this, it has been said, achieved as important a step towards freedom of conscience as did Luther himself in his great Reformation. This system, which secures to each congregation its entire independency, making it a complete church, with powers to manage all its concerns, and minister all the ordinances of religion, now so generally adopted in spirit by all denominations of Christians, — how dear was it to the heart of our New England fathers! and how intimately is it associated with, how much has it contributed to, New England's glory! In the very dawn of New England history, in low-roofed dwellings, from whose doors the dark forest had not yet been cleared, these venerable men devoted themselves, with infinite zeal and fidelity, to this grand and simple system. In hardship, in weakness, and amid privations, they laid its foundation; year after year they watched and piled stone after stone of the edifice, until it arose in severe simplicity and grandeur, and now stands the bulwark and glory of the State. Trained amid its great and precious privileges, we are scarcely conscious how great and precious they

are; we scarcely know what a boon has come to us, in this inheritance of spiritual freedom. We know not what it is to feel the weight of ecclesiastical authority pressing upon the free spirit, set to detect its latent heresies, to embarrass it in its search after truth, and check its wanderings into unknown fields of thought. We can hardly conceive how learning has been silenced, and science been hindered, and wise reforms stayed in their course, by ecclesiastical interpositions. We ought to love and venerate a system which secures freedom of thought; which leaves no bond of fear upon the conscience, no bond of superstition in the heart; which has opened prison doors, and enabled the spirit to go forth, it may be under angelic guidance, to the light of heaven's truth, and the enjoyment of that liberty wherewith Christ makes men free. And have we considered how much this system is doing to secure us against those perils which threaten every Protestant country? Within a few years, we have seen hordes of blind votaries of the papal religion crowding into our cities. We see the cross planted upon our green hills, and the religious orders that in old times have ruled Christendom with the rod of iron, sustained and overturned the thrones of kings, entrenched in the very midst of us, and devoted, with unceasing activity, to the spread of their faith. We see what is done, already here and in England, by the supreme authority of the Catholic

Church; a thing which manifests a boldness, a stretch of presumption, that almost renders it sublime. We see the Pope, a creature so feeble that he can scarcely rest in security a night in his own capitol, parcelling out this country and that, creating fair benefices, and bestowing the highest ecclesiastical preferments, as if the world were all his own. Now, in our fatherland, this has become a very serious thing; for what security is there against the reality of these pretensions? Her learning is no defence against the spread of Popery; for in the very heart of her universities it has reaped the richest harvests. The ancient Established Church affords no guarantee; for the still more ancient church stands on the opposite side of the way, and invites, by the same arguments, proselytes to come and repose in her bosom; and well may those who wish well to their country and humanity be alarmed by her unexpected success and extravagant pretensions. It is a thing to demand the attention of English legislators, and spread anxiety through every village in the kingdom. But what shall we say of ourselves? No such anxiety is or needs here be felt. The Pope may appoint a cardinal in every state, a bishop in every county, and we will only smile at the barren and empty title; assured that in our public schools, free to all, and in our system of Congregationalism, so in harmony with our political institutions, we have a guarantee

against the enslaving influences of the hierarchy. We fear not that it will seize or win the hearts of our people, or hold them by a superstitious reverence. Instead of a tame submission to its bold assumptions, its subjects will emancipate themselves more and more; for they have already more than once appealed to the principles of independency, and the power of legal majorities.*

Our New England churches have the glory of striking out a simple but magnificent form of church organization; they have also the glory of establishing a principle, which is likewise simple as it is grand. The system of dogmas, under which New England Congregationalists grew, was cold and grim and repulsive; more harsh, perhaps, than in any part of Christendom, unless it have been among the stern old Covenanters of Scotland. But it must be remembered, that our forefathers, driven hither by the storms of persecution, cast upon these rough shores, compelled to contend with the wilderness and want, by a natural congeniality and sympathy of feeling, attached themselves to the severer and gloomier aspects of religion. They looked to God more as the Sovereign than as the forgiving Father. They contemplated the law given by Moses more than the truth and grace which came by Jesus Christ. And they loved the creed, sour and repulsive as it was; for they thought it gave

* Note C.

them the iron strength that was in them; and they loved to place themselves under its severest and sternest influence, to be made to fear and quake, as they sat beneath the ministrations of the pulpit, while it expounded the threatenings of the law, and proclaimed the doom of the guilty, with no relentings of mercy, and a voice that did not falter; for they thought it made them better, subdued their rebellious hearts, and humbled their pride in the dust. But they knew not that it was another and deeper principle which imparted to them their lofty virtues, their personal holiness, their generous sympathies, their self-sacrificing devotion. It was not Calvinism which diffused a glory around the New England character; but it was reverence, it was universal religion; it was, as it has been strikingly said, the desire of progress, the intense yearning for something better in the husk of Calvinism. The husk was thrown aside a century ago, shrivelled and hard and unsightly; but the internal principle, the desire of movement and progress, remained behind. It was proclaimed by John Robinson on the shores of Holland, when he said he was confident that new truth was to break out of God's holy word, and exhorted the Pilgrims to receive it as it should be revealed to them; and it has been the guiding principle of the New England mind. It is not of the past, — it has not been embalmed and buried in a creed, — but it

lies in the future, and is seen in visions from afar. New England has been what she is through her reverence for the word of God and the gospel of Christ; cherishing a spirit of independent thought; following out great principles, dimly discerned, to their legitimate results; and welcoming the light, come from what source it might, that is shed upon the path of our pilgrimage. Let me be understood. I do not mean that a new revelation has been made, or a new gospel has been preached. There is now to be no new dispensation of mercy, no new sacrifice for sin, no new revelations of the divine will; nor have there been. But what I mean is, that as we have but just opened our eyes upon the creation, and occupy a little remote spot in the wide universe, and the clouds lie thick upon our horizon, from age to age a clearer comprehension may be gained of God's great revelation; new light may burst upon us out of the word of life. In the material world, the laws and ordinances of the creation are as they were in the beginning; but, generation after generation, new facts are revealed to the human mind; new wonders are disclosed; mysteries, long hidden, become incorporated among the familiar facts of daily life. So it is with the spiritual and divine. Our eyes are opened, and we see things, hidden from the wise and prudent, now revealed even unto babes; and many a fact in Christ's history, and many a precept which fell

from his lips, has been understood as it was never understood before. The grandeur and beauty and divinity of the Christian system open on the mind with new reality and power; we perceive more and more its harmony with all that we know of God in his creation, and learn more and more its adaptation to our deep necessities, as they are revealed in our souls.

The New England churches have the glory, then, of establishing spiritual freedom and progress upon an immovable basis, so that they have become inwrought in the web of our future destinies. It would be impossible to bring back the ancient reign of bigotry and superstition. So far from this, I finally add, that this freedom and progress have resulted, among all intelligent and right-minded persons, in a system of commonly acknowledged truths, through which the members of the different denominations of Christians become one by the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace. Beneath all divergent opinions, there are truths of religion, old as Christianity, familiar in the mouths of Christ and his apostles, sanctified by the prayers of saints, and sealed by the blood of martyrs; truths which underlie all the faiths of Christendom, and are drawn out with more or less of clearness in all creeds.* Out of the same elements grow substances diverse in quality and form; from the bosom

* Note D.

of the same earth, warmed by the same sun, the fragile flower, the pine that holds the sparrow's nest, and the oak that braves a hundred storms upon the mountains. There are common truths, the same elements, found in the belief of all Christian nations. They are such as arm the soul in the day of trial, strengthen the sense of human responsibility, shed beauty and sanctity on human homes, and fringe the cloud that settles down at last on mortal things. There are such truths found in the belief of all sects; for where, among what Christian people, may you not find beautiful examples of the Christian life, — men and women with aims so high, with a spirit so sweet and a walk so holy, that we are sure that they are clothed with the wedding garment, and sealed with the blood of the Lamb? Who would think of shutting such men as Leighton, Fenelon, Penn, Watts, Wesley, Hall, Chalmers, Channing, from the Christian fold? They were reared in the bosom of eight Christian sects; yet what sect would claim any one as exclusively its own? As well claim the sun as its own, because his rays shine more directly on its fields; or the firmament as its own, because its dews distil more copiously upon its gardens. Every good and gifted man belongs to his age, his race; and it is wonderful to see how the same great principles and affections lie deepest in every good and gifted man's bosom. Men may differ in form and feature; but

there is the human form and feature, and each bears the seal and signet of a man. So Christian men may differ; but there is the common truth, the unity of faith and spirit, which shows them of the same Christian family. Is it too much to say that our New England churches have done much, very much, to define and inspire a profound reverence for this ancient, venerable, time-hallowed, heart-enkindling, common faith of Christendom? Who hears now of theological riddles and contradictions, of fate and fore-ordination, of election and reprobation; those dry and frigid subjects on which our forefathers delighted to try their strength? Who hears of them now in any intelligent New England pulpit? They are gone and laid to rest, like those profitless questions of the realists and nominalists, which once shook Christendom to its centre, and armed brethren in the battle-field against each other. Go now from pulpit to pulpit, and how seldom will you hear doctrines taught which the good Christian man will hesitate to receive! He will hear proclaimed a profound respect for the authority of the New Testament, a belief of Christ's mission and wonderful history, of man's dependence and duty and responsibleness, and of the deep things of life and death and eternity. He will hear of one God, the Father, and one Mediator between God and man, and a divinely illuminating and persuasive Spirit, that aids us in our infirmities, and sanctifies and saves.

He will hear of the need of penitence and the efficacy of prayer, of the triumphs of faith and the pardon of sin, of the early consecration on the banks of Jordan and the later victory on the cross of Calvary, of a heaven of love to be begun below and a heaven of bliss to be enjoyed above. He will hear of these, and such truths as these; of that "venerable and uncontroverted Christianity" which has been handed down through sixty generations and millions of souls, and which we would transmit to millions more; and whatever else he may hear that is peculiar and distinctive, if it sheds not light on these truths and such as these; if it serves to lead the mind away from these, and stand between them and the human heart, — then, I say, that pulpit in which it is done is not a Christian pulpit; it has gone out of the way; it does not express the spirit of the intelligent New England pulpit.

We have seen in what the glory of our New England churches has consisted. As their chiefest work, they have bravely maintained man's spiritual freedom and progress, and, as a consequence, more than anywhere else, vindicated the integrity and simplicity of our ancient Christian faith. And now it remains for us to show in what the glory of those which are to be reared shall consist, and how it shall be greater, — in other words, in what respects our churches have a greater work to do than ever before. A little reflection will enable us to perceive.

1. In the first place, the church will do a great work, if, under the altered circumstances of society, she shall be able to vindicate her freedom, maintain the principle of independence, and hold her rightful spiritual supremacy. A noble English tourist, Lord Morpeth, honored beyond most in his own country, after commending our religious institutions in terms of the highest eulogy, after saying that the voluntary system and the system of independency have much to commend them, adds, — "But, admirable as they are, their strength and permanency have not been tested. Wait until these people have learned something of the discomforts of a crowded population, of ignorance and poverty, and then see what they are worth." And this, my brethren, is the trial through which we are hastening to pass: the *great* problem is to be solved (it shall be solved before this edifice which we now enter shall yield to the elements, and become a ruin), whether the system established and matured by our venerable fathers shall also crumble, and become a mournful failure. I say the *great* problem; for who yet comprehends the vast interests involved in its maintenance? How many in other lands, vexed and thwarted and controlled in their religious rights, taxed for that which they do not receive, responsible for that over which they have no control, sigh for deliverance! Look at Scotland. See one half her people rising up as one man, and passing the doors of the venerable

churches where they and their fathers had worshipped, and, pitching their tent upon the hillside and the barren moor, have counted not the cost, in order that they might be free, — enjoy the very liberty which we think so lightly of. And is that a small thing which good and intelligent men prize so dearly? Our fathers said that they wanted no State-interference, no State-patronage, in the maintenance of religion. They said they would charge themselves with the responsibility; that they would see to it that its institutions should be sustained, its light be shed in every man's dwelling, and its heavenly influence on every heart. It was a brave resolve; it was a great and grave responsibilty; and we should feel it to be so! Alas for us, if our vigilance now sleeps, and we let them languish! Alas for us, if the friends of religion and good order do not stand by them now! for the trial is coming which has never come before, — the trial of increased worldly activities, of ease and luxury and worldly success, — when the increasing cares of life shall more thoroughly absorb the mind, and the deceitfulness of riches blind the eye and harden the heart. Then shall it be seen whether the interest in the reality of religion shall be able to preserve even the form. I know not what the result may be; but I know, that, now and hereafter, we ought to take alarm at the first shadow of neglect. If the time comes when these institutions shall languish

among us for want of sufficient support; if, for slight causes, men shall withdraw their sympathy and aid, and leave the dust to lie undisturbed on the altar, and silence unbroken to reign in the sanctuary; and large numbers of the people shall hang about the borders of Christian societies, protected by their ministrations, but not lifting a finger for their support, — I can well conceive the tones of warning and indignation in which some bold successor, standing where I now stand, shall utter his voice. "Sirs," he will say, addressing his faithless generation, "know ye what ye do, and whither all this leads? Shall our children drink of the intoxicating cup of prosperity, plunge into the maddening strife of business, encounter the fearful, heart-rending trials of life, and secure for themselves no religious influence, — know no refuge nor sanctuary of peace? Would ye see the beams of yonder sun quenched, and the chill and damps and darkness of uninterrupted night upon us? Would ye forego the great charm of existence, and suffer a tenfold horror to gather around the bed of death? Would ye be false to the cause of religious liberty and the means of holy living? Would ye be deaf to the sigh that is going up from the bosom of Christendom, and faithless to the vow and pledge of your fathers?" I know not, my brethren, what the future may bring. Thank God, amid the revolutions that are sweeping over us like a flood, and

sending up like that sand and sea-weed, as yet religion and religious worship survive; and if, amid the growing worldliness and multiplying temptations attending a growing state and a crowded population, our churches shall maintain their moral and spiritual position; if they shall stand, in the midst of this pressure, objects of love and veneration; if they shall continue to be the home of a people's affections, and shed a heavenly influence over a people's heart, — then will they be invested with a glory greater than if they contained a nation's jewels, and were covered with plates of gold. Remember, institutions more imposing than our own have passed away. There were once the seven churches of Asia, and marble temples on the shores of Africa; but they lost their spiritual power, and now the camel journeys over them in solitude, and the owl hoots amid their ruins.

2. Again, our churches have a great work to do to meet the growing scepticism and irreligion of the times. Never were there more needed intelligence, comprehensive thought, and earnest devotion, if Christianity is to hold its commanding place in society. There are elements now at work on the public mind which will demand from the pulpit something more than a dull repetition of stereotyped doctrines, and from Christian worshippers something more than a traditional, formal observance of Christian worship.

Do you ask for an explanation? Mark the vast changes that are going on in the current of human thought, scarcely less momentous than when the men of a past age were startled by the bold assertions of Copernicus, or "trembled before the optic glass of the Tuscan artist." Look at the pretensions and discoveries of science, real and false, in our day. See the student of geology, going down into the secret laboratories of nature, and pronouncing on the material processes of creation; reading there, on the rocky foundations of the earth, the history of the world, ages on ages before man had a being; peopling it with a succession of gigantic, uncouth forms, "wandering and wading through the tall reeds of the miry and dimly-lighted globe." And some are striving, through these discoveries, to build up a splendid system of materialism, which takes away the hope of immortality, and the dignity of man. Then, again, the question is entertained of the origin and unity of the human race, and grave inferences are drawn from the fact that bear closely upon our Christian faith. Then, see the wonderful inventions and disclosures of modern science, that are doing so much to change the whole face of society; the mighty creative skill, which, almost without the intervention of human agency, clothes a nation; the subtle powers of nature, revealed for the uses of man; the imprisoned vapor, that bears him over land, as on the wings of the wind,

and over sea, against waves and tides, as if it were a thing of life; and then that wonder of the age, the lightning messenger, which conveys our thoughts, in an instant, over mountains and rivers and forests, and enables us to converse at the two extremities of the continent, as if we stood face to face. Now, these discoveries, wonderful and beneficent as they are, have not brought, nor do they bring, unmixed good. True science and Christianity will ever go hand in hand. But it cannot be denied that there is a false science; that the age is becoming material and mechanical; that men are seeking in mechanical agencies for explanations of all that is most grand and glorious in creation, are aiming to bring every thing to the test of the senses, and yield, more perhaps than we have suspected, to a disbelief in the spiritual and divine.* In some respects, the mind of the age seems almost unsettled. There is a spell upon it; it delights most in the extravagancies of scepticism or open-mouthed credulity; it sets at nought the common rules of evidence, confounds the material and the immaterial, and accepts statements, compared with which the stories of goblins and ghosts, that frightened our childhood, are trite and commonplace. You see the error, so plausible and yet so dangerous, under one name or another, prevailing widely. Sometimes it is seen in the strange explanations of the

* Note E.

phenomena of our religion, as if they partook of the nature of mesmerism; sometimes in the shape of intolerance towards all existing modes of worship; sometimes in entire abnegation of human responsibility; in a blind spirit of reform, and a diseased, ill-regulated philanthropy. Under whatever form, it is unfriendly to a vigorous and healthful Christianity. The wonderful events of the gospel, its venerable authority, its revelations and sanctions, under its touch, sink to the low level of ordinary history; and the grandest disclosures ever made to man, the most quickening influences ever exerted upon him, are shorn of their power, and leave the soul to struggle unaided, with its temptations; to fall into moral weakness, spiritual decline and death; — leave society, under the pressure of unexampled outward forces, to rush blindly on to its ruin. And, now, what is to be the great work of our Christian pulpits? It is to show, that, while Christianity is rational and tolerant, and shrinks not from the investigations of true science, it is itself a science, which has God for its author, Christ for its teacher, and human happiness for its end. It is to show that the loftiest speculations and grandest discoveries of man serve only, as they have already done, to render more illustrious the revelations of God; that that venerable Christianity which moved the eloquence of the apostles, breathed in the prayers of saints, and was

confirmed by the blood of martyrs, is not to be classed with the inane systems of man's devising, — but is light come from the very fountains of light, and love poured from the very bosom of eternal love, — is the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation; and the pulpit that is true to its trust will ever speak of it, not as an ordinary blessing, but as God's greatest gift to man. "It has to speak," in the language of Channing, "not of ordinary life, nor of the most distinguished agents of ordinary history, but of men inspired and empowered to work the most wonderful revolutions in society; and especially of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the theme of prophecy, the revealer of grace and truth, the Saviour from sin, the conqueror of death, who hath left us an example of immaculate virtue, whose love passeth knowledge, and whose history, combining the strange and touching contrasts of the cross, the resurrection, and an heavenly throne, surpasses all other records in interest and grandeur. It has to speak, not of transitory concerns, but of happiness and misery transcending in duration and degree the most joyful and suffering conditions of the present state. It has to speak of the faintly shadowed but solemn consummation of this world's eventful history, of the coming of the Son of man, the resurrection, the judgment, the retributions of the last day." Let our pulpits speak on such themes, and in strains like these; and all

these errors and vagaries and conceits will vanish like the dreams of the night, the pulpit will hold its rightful moral position, and the house of God will be the object of a people's love and the gate of heaven. The old familiar days will return, when men pondered the word of God, and wrestled in prayer; when, how remotely soever they lived, they thronged the weekly sanctuary, albeit in the face of the winter's storm, and sat through the long services in the rigors of a winter's day; and when, however unworthy they felt themselves to be, they came up to the support of religious ordinances, mused in silence until the flame of devotion burned in their bosom, and went earnestly and thoughtfully about their duties; and so, when the night of their stern conflicts came, and the winter's storm found them scantily provided, and the dark forest frowned ominously upon them, they were strong, and quit themselves like men. So, my brethren, in the greater trials that are coming to these people in their ease and sloth and unrestrained license, and the wantonness of their speculations, their only security will be found in wise and well-considered religion, — in humbleness, in reverence, in profound religious affections. There must be a love such as heroes and martyrs have felt. "Cut a little deeper," said one of Napoleon's veterans, whose bosom had been laid bare by a cannon-shot, and was now opened by the surgeon's knife; — "cut a little

deeper, and you will see there the image of the emperor." In the same spirit the old Jesuits came from the polished circles of Europe, plunged into the western wilderness, adopted the habits of savages, and, hundreds of miles away from civilized life, reared their rude cross and sung cheerfully their morning and evening hymn, and, when need were, laid down their lives for the poor children of the forest. Dying, they claimed no glory in death; but, laying their hand upon their bosom, exclaimed, "If you could see my heart, you would read on it the sweet name of Jesus, written in letters of gold." Let there be in the midst of our congregations the spirit of cheerful, enlightened, earnest devotion, and they will be prepared for any times that may come.

3. Again: the ministrations of our churches, in order to accomplish their work, must be more practical than they have been in past times. One of the old saints boasts that the world owed him a debt of gratitude, because, in choosing a place for a religious community, he had selected a spot so savage, wild, and inaccessible, there was no chance of the saint's being profaned by the presence of the sinner. Too often has Christianity been conceived of in this spirit, represented as something mystical, — something which, through a mysterious process of faith, prepares the soul for the joys of heaven, while it urges no very close scrutiny into the daily doings on

earth. Religious duties have been insisted on; men have thought it good to rise at midnight, and engage in acts of devotion; but they have been slow to perceive, that the duties of the household, the market-place, and the social gathering, may also be and should be religious duties. They have kept them apart, just as, in the old English castles, the chapel and the banqueting-room were built at the opposite ends; so that the reveller's song should not reach the ears of the devotee, — which was well; nor the sweet melody of the hymn, and the moving accents of the prayer, steal into the hall of feasting, — which was not well. Religion and the world have been kept too far apart. It must not be so now in that future which is hastening to meet us. If the pulpit is to expend itself in a round of dogmas, which, if true, have no direct influence upon the character; if it must content itself with general and vague statements, lest it shall be accused of going out of its sphere; in a word, if it is not practical, it is nothing. You may as well close the doors of the church, — let the dust gather upon its cushions, and the winds riot through the empty aisles, — until it shall grow old and crumble in ruin. Yes, better crumble, as holding out false lures, and preaching peace when there is no peace, than be dumb when it ought to speak. For, here in business are practices followed, here in politics are sentiments avowed, here in the pleasure-loving world

are ways of living justified, that take away all nobleness, and make the very heart ache; and shall not the pulpit, which is reared in God's name, be definite, express, and practical? Heaven help us, if it cannot speak. We need, my brethren, to have religion and the affairs of life brought into the closest proximity, just as they were by the devout old people of the classical times. In Rome, side by side, were two marble structures, of wondrous beauty and magnificence, dedicated to two great objects of Roman worship: one was the most honored temple of religion; the other was the Roman mint. The Hebrew and Grecian coin were both covered with religious devices, signifying that religion and the affairs of business should go hand in hand together. Let the sanctity and authority of the one enforce the obligations of truth, fidelity, and justice in the other. I welcome, then, this costly and tasteful church, with its classic front, its carved and curious ornaments, and its religious emblems, standing on your crowded street, where traffic is busy by day, and where the dissolute hurry by to the haunts of revelry, and the gay to the halls of pleasure, by night. You have done well to place it side by side with the temples of justice, showing that even the majesty, armed with the terrors of the law, is inefficient without the sanctions of religion. You have done well to place it upon an eminence, with its roof lifted high above your

halls, your warehouses, and your own private dwellings; its graceful spire piercing the skies; signifying that the fear of God, a spirit of reverence, a religious awe, are to preside over every transaction on the pavement beneath; and that conscience is to weigh as in a scale every act between man and man, and, in the sanctuary of each man's bosom, whisper its approval or condemnation. Let, then, this house stand, transmitted to our children and our children's children, to teach them how profoundly we regarded religion as the presiding spirit of all active, political, and social life. When they shall come here from their farms, their workshops, and their places of business, with grave questions of traffic, politics, and social duty; of the relations between human governments and the divine, — questions that go into the unexplored depths of ethical and divine philosophy; though all else be dumb, let this pulpit speak with wisdom and boldness, and yet with modesty; let the spirit of reverence and sanctity fill this house, and, like the dews of Hermon, fall on and refresh the heart of this great community.

4. I add one more consideration. If our churches are to accomplish their great work, and meet the wants of the coming time, they must not be exclusive, but must be genial, generous, of large sympathies; cheerful, spiritual, and uplifting. Has any thing done such injury to the cause of religion, — any amount of oppo-

sition, misrepresentation, or persecution, as the narrow, grossly bigoted spirit that has prevailed among its disciples? I acquit no sect here, and I say it is the bane of all great and generous religious action. A treaty of amnesty has, indeed, passed between the sects; and the savage spirit of denunciation, that was heard growling and cursing through the land, has been driven away. A kindlier and gentler feeling has arisen. But still is there that perfect frankness, cordiality, and mutual confidence, which should exist among disciples of the same Master? In mapping out Christendom, are there not those who are slow to fix the cross, except to that little spot which they may occupy? They say of their neighbors they are good men, very good men; but they do not like to be questioned too closely about their Christianity. They do not like to be placed in a position, where, by their own acts, they must express their fellowship, or even acknowledge their Christian standing. Now, my hearers, this is precisely the thing which I protest against. I cannot bear this isolation in my religious sympathies: it is not good for any of us. I do not want a man to say to me, he thinks me a very good man, but more than hints that he regards me as a very sorry Christian. I do not want him to honor me in his thought for that which I do not possess, and withhold his sympathy for that which I regard as the all in all. If I am not a Christian, I am not a good man. I am nothing. I

have no basis for the virtue which I may seem to have. I have no foundation on which to stand. My ease is folly, and my cheerfulness as the laughter of the maniac. Let not, however, this train of remark be misapplied. It is our happiness in this city to witness a harmony, a cordiality, a just appreciation among the churches, that has never been surpassed. We gladly share in offices of Christian kindness, interchange pledges of Christian affection, and work together for the common good. So should it be everywhere. Let us have done with this chilling reserve, these suspicions and jealousies. We cannot afford to lose from the catalogue of Christian graces such things as honesty, integrity, disinterested, self-sacrificing goodness. We need to enlist them all, if we would reclaim a world lying in wickedness, and still this troubled sea of sorrow. Let this church, then, be cordial, frank, and world-wide in its sympathies, and it will be invested with an unspeakable glory. God grant that he who in coming time shall stand in this place may never be permitted to give to party what was meant for mankind! If he shall so far forget the spirit of the great Master as to open his lips in bitterness, or raise his hand in denunciation, I will not say, May his tongue cleave to the roof of his mouth,—may his arm be broken at the socket! but I will pray that he may be renovated and saved, though it be as by fire.

Again: in the church there must be also a sympa-

thy with the warm emotions of childhood and youth, with their quick sensibilities, their generous enthusiasm. How strikingly was this spirit manifested in the great Master of Christians! When did *he* ever repulse the young and confiding affections? See him, in the closing hours of his life, on his way towards Jerusalem, from which he was no more to go out; her blood-stained walls rising ominously before him, — the dark cross already planted on Calvary! — in that hour when he was going to confront death in his own dominions, and achieve his last great triumph, he could pause, and gather the children and youth around him; so win their affections, and awaken their generous enthusiasm, that they strewed his way with palm-leaves, and cheered it with the chant of victory. So should the religion of Christ be in all her varied ministrations, — not cold and repulsive, but warm and winning, resting upon the mind like the early sunlight upon the waters, touching the heart like the earliest song of the spring-bird, and filling the soul with mysterious awe and gladness, as when that wonderful being stood in the midst of the young of Judea, and, with a look of majesty and love such as had never been before, blessed them. What might not his religion do, if she could always speak in his own persuasive and winning accents! Let the children and youth who, in long succession, shall be reared under the roof of this church, hear no other. Let this house be associated

in their minds with all that is beautiful and tender and heroic. Let its influence ever be blissful and blessed. Let it breathe tranquillity and peace; let it be to them the gate of heaven.

Once more: the pulpit that is hereafter to be efficient must comprehend something of the fiery trials of life, and be touched with compassion and tenderness for human infirmity. Let there be no soft terms in describing the meanness and wickedness of man's indulgences. No language can adequately depict the ruin and desolation which they bring. No pen or pencil has yet portrayed their dark horrors. The sin — let it stand out in its naked deformity, as a thing abhorrent in the eyes of God and all good men: but the sinner — let him be regarded with gentlest pity and compassion; not as altogether guiltless, but wrapped in the folds of a serpent whose scales have glittered and dazzled and allured, — whose breath is poison, and whose sting is death. What words so melancholy in human use as those sad words, — an erring and fallen man! How many tender thoughts should gather about him! how gently, and with what sympathy, should he be regarded by those who would save him! Let the house of God be the hospital for his spiritual maladies and the sanctuary of peace. In the old Hebrew times there were cities of refuge to which the guilty and troubled might fly. The roads thither were all smooth and broad; and at the corners of the highways

were guide-boards on which it was written, "Refuge." So on the doors of the church, at the base of the altar, should it be written, "Refuge." Let these hallowed courts ever be a refuge for the weak, erring, and penitent heart. Lowly laid on this altar, may it find rest. Let not the bruised reed be broken, nor the smoking flax be quenched. Let there be no scorn of human infirmity, no crushing of human hope; but rather let every peel of yonder bell, every note of yonder organ, be a tone of encouragement, and every word from this pulpit breathe sympathy and solace.

Finally: the pulpit, in order to fulfil its great mission, must be consoling, cheerful, uplifting. For many years to come, we trust, this house will stand, and its aspects remain unchanged; but, ere long, how changed will be our human relations! Under what varied and altered circumstances will you enter these portals! Not as you now do with hallowed joy and gladness, from houses that are full, from family circles that are unbroken, with the cheerful faces and the greetings of friends all around you; but from homes you will come, in which has been the anguish of sorrow, and over which the hours have worn slowly and heavily away; where you have watched amid the scarcely breathing stillness of the sick-room, your own taper burning when every light around was extinguished; and where, in the chamber of death, you have looked for the last time on the face of your loved

ones, and the hearthstone and the heart have been made desolate; and sadly will you enter here, and steal silently to your pew, and sit and meditate and pray. Oh! then, when spear and shield and buckler shall be broken, and all earthly supports shall fail; when, in the depth of its darkness and desolation, the soul shall cry out for help, — what a glory shall invest this pulpit, if it shall speak adequately to this great sorrow, offer the tender sympathy, still the tumult of the bosom, and breathe into it a divine solace and support!

Again you will come, and go out from these courts, to enter them no more. Other forms will occupy your familiar places, and other eyes gaze upon these scenes. One and another will go, until all are gone, — minister and people, — not one left who witnesses the transactions of this day; and yet the house will stand, and there will come here on sabbath mornings, season after season, minister and people as yet unborn, — a congregation whom we do not know. My brethren, when I stand here in this newly erected house, look down the opening vista, and trace its history onward, embracing all that is fearful and momentous in human experience, touching the great interests of time and eternity, — no act seems so impressive as that in which we are engaged, no place seems so holy as that in which we meet. May the Spirit of the Lord be enthroned in this house! and

may the tokens of his presence be here, as when of old he sat upon his throne, and the train of his splendid robe filled the temple! May the pledges of Christ's love be here, and inward light and strength and peace be found; so that they who in coming time shall gather here, may contemplate unmoved the awful vicissitudes of human life, calmly survey the changeful and heaving billows, and await in cheerfulness the hour when time shall be no more, and they shall be summoned to join in the worship of the upper world, and share in the bliss of heaven!

I have now done. I have delivered my message. I have shown to what purposes this house is to be dedicated and devoted. But, brethren and friends of this Christian society, I linger a little longer. There are thoughts crowding into my mind, there are associations clustering about my heart, which I cannot dismiss if I would. I have spoken of the future: the past also, with all its solemn memories, is present with me; for to-morrow closes just twenty-four years since I was ordained in the midst of you. How fresh in my mind are the objects and events of that day! — the humble church in which I made my ordination vows, still surviving; the fathers and brethren in the ministry who then gathered around me, and took a part in the service, all gone with a single exception! There were Harris and Brazer and Kirkland and Thayer and Allen and Ripley (who is no longer in

the ministry), all here; and now I call them by name, and they are not. And there was another, from whose lips I received the charge to be faithful to you, and the cause with which we are entrusted, — he who is never to be mentioned here but with veneration and affection, with whom I walked so pleasantly for twelve years, and whose presence in our assemblies shed the fragrance of sanctity. Bancroft, too, is gone! * Twenty-four years! and now to-day I seem to be beginning my ministry anew, and yet not as I then began it. The dew of youth, that was then fresh, has melted away; the strength of manhood has begun to decline; and the extravagant hopes and promises of young life have been succeeded by the sober reality of maturer years. But, brethren, there are ties of affection, there is a strength of attachment, which length of years does not weaken, but which — may I not say it? — the frank intercourse of a quarter of a century has cemented, — ties to be broken only when the heartstrings are severed, and the pulse ceases to beat. Who, then, may with more cordiality congratulate you on the bright auspices of this day? And if they only were with us whom you and I have known, with whom we have walked to the house of God in company, — now looking upon us, we trust, from other spheres, — our joy would be full. But, brethren, there is another temple, not made with hands: may

* Note F,

we not hope to join them there, and unite in that song of the redeemed which they only can chant who have shared the mingled lot of life together?

Meanwhile, let us remember, all mortal things decay; and this house which we have builded, when seasons have come and gone, after perhaps a century of years, will also decay and fall in ruins. As I contemplate that distant day when this tower shall be dismantled, these walls crumble, and the consecrated ground over which we stand shall again be laid bare to the sunlight and the dews of heaven, indulge me a moment. There is a vision passing before my eyes with the distinctness of reality, full of encouragement and hope. I stand upon one of our neighboring hills on a fair spring morning like this. The snows of winter are gone, and the early verdure and the spring-flower have begun to appear. The shadows of night have dispersed; the sun has risen; the mists that hang over the valley have cleared away, and a scene of beauty and magnificence greets my eyes. A great city is here extending through our valley, and covering all our hill-sides. I look down upon the spacious, princely habitations of men, monuments of their enterprise and skill and social prosperity. I see noble warehouses, halls of science, schools of learning, galleries of art, hospitals for the sick and the insane, — all the tokens of a great Christian people. I see in every direction, in the distant horizon, the gigantic train,

bearing hither the treasures of every clime, and travellers from all countries. I see the riches of cultivation, the ornaments of a refined taste, the signs of moral and Christian virtue, all around. I hear the inhabitants numbered by tens of thousands, eminent among all people for their intelligence and manliness, for truthfulness and high-principled integrity, for active sympathy and untiring charity, — eminent for the graces that adorn private and domestic life, and mould the character for heaven. I ask for the sources of this prosperity, refinement, and moral purity. I look around, and in the midst I see the spires of fifty churches, all venerable in the eyes of the people.* This, then, which we this day dedicate, will have grown old; the moss of years will have gathered about it; and it waits to give place to another yet more majestic. Yet, my brethren, old though it be, and a relic of other times, if this church shall have done a good work; if it shall have taught the religion of Christ with fidelity and freedom and power; if it shall have watched over the highest interests of this people, and have built them up in a most holy faith and affection; if the multitudes who have entered its portals shall have found it the house of God and the gate of heaven, — then, though a ruin, it shall be held in honor by all good men. The actors in this day's doings shall be remembered, and it shall be invested

* Note G.

with a glory like that of the second temple which the Son of man once entered, and has consecrated for ever by his spiritual presence. Arise, then, O Lord! and enter into thy rest, thou and the ark of thy covenant. Thy presence and thy peace ever be in this place!

APPENDIX.

Note A.

This is the third house occupied by the congregation of the Second Parish, which was formed in March, 1785. After worshipping for six years in the Court House (the building then standing on the site of the old Court House, now occupied as the dwelling-house of George Trumbull, Esq.), they dedicated their first meeting-house, Jan. 1, 1792. This edifice is still standing. It is the school-house on Summer-street, but has undergone considerable changes externally as well as internally. It contained originally sixty-one pews. Compared with our present church, it was an humble edifice; but, considering the stinted means of the parish, it was a costly structure. I have before me the names of the original pew-owners, nine only of which are found on the present list of the society, — Allen, Bangs, Flagg, Green, Heywood, Lincoln, Mower, Paine, and Rice. The Brazers, the Chandlers, the Stantons, the Putnams, the Thomases, are all gone from our records.

The second house, built of brick, containing one hundred and four pews on the floor and thirty-six in the galleries, stood about twelve feet nearer the street than the present house. The corner-stone was laid with religious ceremonies, Aug. 12, 1828. It was dedicated, Aug. 20, 1829; and burned, Aug. 24, 1849. With the church, a valuable clock on the tower, given by the late Isaiah Thomas, Esq. and a bell weighing 2,300 lbs. were destroyed. The house being under repair, most of the furniture, including the tablets presented by the late Thaddeus Maccarty, Esq., and a clock, the gift of Mr. Samuel B. Scott, was saved.

The present church is built of brick covered with stucco, and is a rich specimen of the Roman Corinthian order. The main walls

are 66 feet by 85 feet, and 36 feet and 6 inches in height. Including the recess for the pulpit behind, 3 feet and 6 inches in depth and 24 feet in length, and a portico, with six Corinthian columns, in front, 13 feet in width, — the whole length of the building is 101 feet and six inches. The steeple, of beautiful proportions, is 190 feet from the pavement. A bell weighing 2,908 lbs. is hung on the tower, beneath which a clock of superior workmanship has been placed by the city. The pews are one hundred and twenty below, and forty-two in the galleries. The recess over the vestibule is occupied by an organ of twenty-eight stops, presenting a rich Corinthian front; while the pulpit, of rosewood, in the form of an extended scroll, stands out from the opposite recess, which has over it an entablature supported by two large Corinthian columns and pilasters. On each side of the pulpit are doors, to lead into a vestry and retiring rooms which it is contemplated building the present season. The expense of the church has been a little more than $25,000.

Note B.

This statement is to be understood with some qualification. The first Bible printed in the Colonies was the Indian Bible, translated by John Elliot; the first edition in 1663, and the second, after having been six years in going through the press, in 1685. There was also, in 1752, a small edition of an English Bible in small quarto, clandestinely published by Kneeland and Green, Boston, with the name of "Mark Bassett, London," on the title-page, who only, as printer to the king, was authorized to print it. Mr. Thomas's edition, published in 1791, was in two volumes, folio, with plates. A copy, beautifully bound in calf and gilt, was presented to the Second Congregational Society by Mrs. Mary Thomas, the wife of the publisher, Jan. 1, 1798, and was used in the services of the pulpit until the day of the dedication, when a splendid copy from the Oxford press, the gift of the young men of the society, was laid upon the desk. The proof-sheets of Mr. Thomas's edition were corrected by the late Rev. Mr. Avery of Holden, and passed, as we are told in the preface, under the eye of the ministers of Worcester. After fifty years' use, no error has been detected. These volumes will be sacredly preserved and cherished by the children and children's children of those who

received them in the days of their feebleness, and read from them, from week to week, for more than half a century.

Note C.

"It is the settled opinion of many of the most thoughtful of the New Englanders, that the assertion of the independence of each separate congregation was as great a step towards freedom of conscience as all that had been previously gained by Luther's Reformation. . . . To show how widely the spirit of their peculiar ecclesiastical system has spread, I may state that even the Roman Catholics have in different States, and in three or four cases, made appeal to the courts at law, and endeavored to avail themselves of the principle of the Independents, so that a majority of a separate congregation should be entitled to resist the appointment by their bishop of a priest to whom they had strong objections." — *Lyell's Second Visit to the United States of America.*

Note D.

Of the late Neander, who may be regarded as the truest exponent of the tendencies of European theology at this time, the North British Review, the organ of the new school of Scotch Presbyterianism and the favorite child of Dr. Chalmers, says, without a word of protest, "He has little favor for confessions of faith as the symbolical embodiment of the church's creed. What he most approves of is something in analogy with the Apostles' Creed, which deals chiefly with the great historical facts on which Christianity rests, and which the whole church avows." Is any proof needed to show that the American mind is running in the same direction?

Note E.

The theory of life advocated in some of the popular works of the day, such as the "Vestiges of Creation," is believed to be incompatible with a belief in the immortality of the soul, and the responsibility of man to his Creator. "The evangelistic churches cannot, in consistency with their character or with a due regard to the interests of their people, slight or overlook a form of error at once exceedingly plausible and consummately dangerous, and

which is telling so widely on society that one can scarce travel by railway or in a steamboat, or encounter a group of intelligent mechanics, without finding decided trace of its ravages." Such is the language of the author of the "Footprints of the Creator." Yet in candor it ought to be acknowledged, that the leading scientific minds of the age are all on the side of Christianity.

Note F.

The exercises of the Ordination were the following: — Introductory prayer and reading of the Scriptures by Rev. Alex. Young, of the New South Church, Boston; prayer by Rev. Dr. Thaddeus M. Harris, Dorchester; sermon by Rev. John Brazer, Salem; ordaining prayer, by Rev. Dr. John T. Kirkland, President of Harvard University; charge by Rev. Dr. Bancroft; right hand of fellowship, by Rev. George Ripley, Purchase-street Church, Boston; address to the people, by Rev. Dr. Nathaniel Thayer, Lancaster; concluding prayer, by Rev. Isaac Allen, Bolton.

Note G.

Such a picture may seem the very wantonness of extravagance, except to those who have watched the growth of Worcester for the last twenty years. So late as 1830, the number of inhabitants in the town was 4,172; by the last census, the city numbers more than 10,000. So late as 1834, there were only four religious societies; now there are sixteen. Hitherto, conjecture has fallen short of the reality; and golden opportunities for public improvements have been lost. It is better wisdom to form a generous estimate of our future, and provide for it.

ORDER OF EXERCISES

AT THE

DEDICATION

OF THE

SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN WORCESTER.

ORDER OF EXERCISES.

VOLUNTARY ON THE ORGAN.

CHANT.

INTRODUCTORY PRAYER.

REV. MR. WILLSON, GRAFTON.

LESSONS FROM THE SCRIPTURES.

REV. MR. DAVIS, WATERTOWN.

ORIGINAL HYMN.

REV. MR. SEARS, WAYLAND.

FATHER, we wait thy presence! Here before thee,
First in these lovely courts, we fondly kneel:
Now through these doors come in the King of glory!
Now through our opening souls thy love reveal!

Here may the aged ones, their griefs forgetting,
Breathe the sweet quiet which thy temple fills;
And may the sun of life, when near its setting,
Clothe in more beauteous gleams the distant hills!

When manhood, weary of its work, shall falter,
Worn with the heat and burden of the day,
Here may it bow before thy holy altar,
Then with new strength rejoice upon its way!

May childhood learn the words by Jesus spoken,
Give to him its fresh and morning hours,
Ere sin the earliest charm of life has broken,
And while the dews lie sparkling on the flowers!

And here may all, — old man and blooming maiden,
When with the grievous load of sin opprest,
Hear Jesus' voice, — "Oh! come, ye heavy-laden,
Come unto me, and I will give you rest."

And, passing on through earth's brief joys and trials,
May these thy people join the immortal throng,
Who sweeter incense waft from golden vials,
And worship thee in their unending song.

Father, we wait for thee! for here before thee,
First in these lovely courts, we fondly kneel:
Be lifted up, ye gates! the King of glory
Comes in, his glorious presence to reveal.

DEDICATORY PRAYER.

REV. MR. HALE, WORCESTER.

ANTHEM.

SERMON.

THE PASTOR.

CONCLUDING PRAYER.

REV. MR. CLARKE, UXBRIDGE.

ORIGINAL HYMN.

REV. MR. PIERPONT, MEDFORD.

THINE outward temple, O Most High!
Is where suns burn and planets roll;
Thine inward, where, beneath thine eye,
Love warms and fills a human soul.

These temples, Father, are thine own;
Thy spirit formed them, and doth fill:
Nor wilt thou dwell in these alone;
Thou lovest courts more humble still, —

Fanes builded by thy children's hands,
Wherein thy praises may be sung,
Thy truth sent forth to distant lands,
Thy name invoked with reverent tongue.

Such was the holy temple, where
Our fathers kneeled, our childhood prayed,
Which late the princely power of air
With flaming fire in ashes laid.

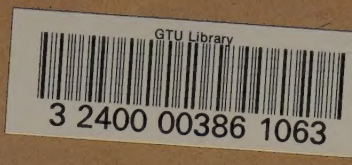
Up from those ashes, now, behold,
To thee another temple springs:
Be in the new as in the old,
When here thy church her offering brings!

Around it be thine angels set,
To guard its gates, to watch its towers,
That, when for worship we are met,
Their voices may be heard with ours!

BENEDICTION.

DATE DUE

GAYLORD PRINTED IN U.S.A.



GTU Library
2400 Ridge Road
Berkeley, CA 94709
For renewals call (510) 649-2500

All items are subject to recall.